to bring home the Army of Egypt. No doubt he guessed that the Directory was showing hopeless incapacity. What he could not know was that on May twenty-sixth they had actually despatched a special courier to express the hope that he himself would return to take command of the armies of the republic. This messenger, we know, never landed in Egypt, but his services were not required; for no sooner was Bonaparte convinced that the crisis he had long foreseen was actually occurring than the resolution he had twice foreshadowed in his letters to Paris was finally taken. He told Marmont that the state of things in Europe compelled him to return: the French armies defeated, all the fruits of his hard-earned victories in Italy lost! Of what use were these incapables who were at the head of affairs? With them all was hesitation, stupidity, and corruption. "I — I alone have borne the burden, and by constant victory have given strength to this administration, which without me would never have lifted its head. On my departure everything had, of necessity, to crumble. Let us not wait until the destruction is complete; the evil would be irremediable. . . . The news of my return will be heard in France simultaneously with that of the destruction of the Turkish army at Aboukir. My presence will elevate men's spirits, restore to the army its lost confidence, and to the good people the hope of a prosperous future/' No commentary could make this language clearer.

His arrangements were quickly made. A few trusted men were confidentially informed of the situation, and Kieber was appointed to the chief command of the army, jwiich was so dishonorably to be abandoned in a most critical situation, reduced as it was to half its original numbers, destitute of provisions and ammunition, surrounded by a hostile, fanatical population, and confronted by the powerful fleet of its most unrelenting